

LET'S EXPLORE

RESERVOIR COUNTRY

BY JOHN T. CUNNINGHAM

One of the many scenic spots along the Delaware between Barryville and Port Jervis which Nature has provided for camera enthusiasts as

well as the landscape artist. There is no sign of human habitation as far as the eye can see on either side of river's tree-lined banks.



Aqueduct twisting away from the Rio Reservoir looks like a monstrous reptile creeping through forestland.

CHOOSING the location for the key dam in the water supply system proposed by the Interstate Commission on the Delaware River Basin (Incodel) was relatively easy. It just had to be in the Shawangunk Valley northeast of Port Jervis. There a natural basin seems to have been waiting centuries for engineers to create a vast lake.

"Incodel Land" is a beautiful and fascinating spot within easy reach of the Jersey motorist. A 30-mile loop starting and ending at Port Jervis presents the opportunity to see why this has long been regarded as ideal reservoir country. Mountains rise to form natural banks, water runs plentifully from the peaks and little residential progress has touched the land. This is perfect for reservoir planning; it's also pleasant to visit in its present state.

Of course not all of "Incodel Land" can be visited so quickly. Other storage dams 30 miles up the Delaware are included in the project now being studied in the hopes of easing metropolitan water shortages forever. However, today's trip does touch the proposed site of the main Godeffroy project—where all the stored water would ultimately flow.

THE quickest way to this reservoir country is by way of Route 23 over High Point Mountain to a junction with Route 6 at the New York border. Route 6 meets Route 209 in Port Jervis and a right turn leads to Godeffroy.

Jersey-linked lore predominates on the numerous roadside markers along Route 209. This is part of the Old Mine Road built by the Dutch 300 years ago to carry copper from Warren County mines to what is now Kingston, N. Y. Other signs delineate the kidnappings, the skirmishes and the bloodshed in the New Jersey Line War which lasted almost 150 years before the present boundary was set in 1834. The joint struggle of New York and New Jersey militia against the marauding Mohawk chief, Col. Brant, is told on still other markers.

Off to the right the rugged tree-covered Shawangunk range dominates the scene. Lesser mountains rise to the left and the motorist can get the feeling of being in the bed of a potential reservoir. Shawangunk, incidentally, was also once the name of New Jersey's Kittatinny Mountains.

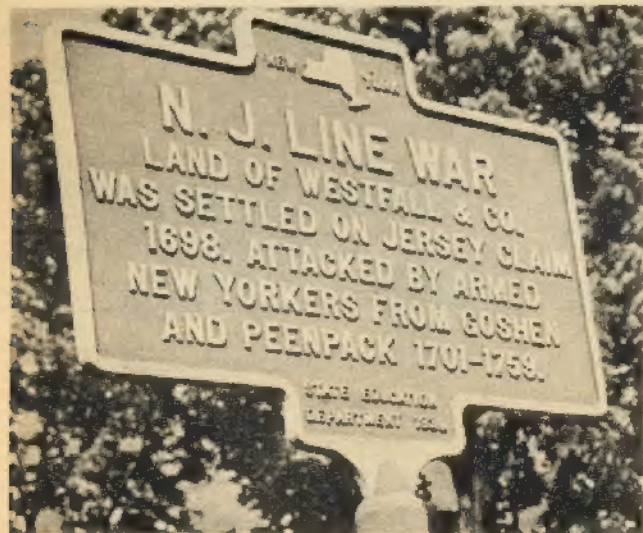


Winding road at Hawk's Nest section of Delaware River drive has appearance of the "Chinese Wall" as it follows the mountain's contours.

Many parking places have been provided along the route to permit the motorist to enjoy panoramic views of river and mountainous terrain.

THIS sparsely-settled section of Orange County well merits its name of Deer Park Township. There are probably more deer than people. The township is said to have more one-room schoolhouses than any other area within 200 miles of the metropolitan area. A dam at Godeffroy would mean relatively little dislocation of residents, naturally a vital concern of reservoir builders.

Water would be backed up for almost 20 miles in the valley if the Godeffroy dam is ever built to stem the flow of the Neversink River. The reservoir would be able to deliver nearly 2,000,000,000 gallons daily to New York and New Jersey cities. The blue-printed project calls for water to be piped overland from a storage dam at Barryville on the Delaware.



One of many historic signs along 209.

Engulfed by the man-made lake would be most of the 17-mile level section of the Delaware and Hudson canal through the valley. This canal linking Honesdale, Pa., and Kingston was opened in 1828 and carried most of New York City's coal until the Civil War. It closed in 1898 after years of declining use. Water-filled portions of the canal can be seen several times along the route.

CUDDEBACKVILLE (whose peculiar name is derived from an early settler) is the place for a left turn over the canal and into wildly-beautiful Oakland Valley, where civilization has yet to make more than a token advance. The rising and falling road through the oak

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Above tour of Shawangunk Valley, starting and ending at Port Jervis, covers area linked to Jersey lore.

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High Point Monument (at left, on horizon) beckons the Jersey motorist from lookout tower overlooking railroad town of Port Jervis. Three states—New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania—can be seen from lookout at point in distance where the Delaware curves away after absorbing waters of the Neversink.

LET'S EXPLORE—The Delaware River Basin

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forest opens occasionally to give far-off mountain views. To the left a rapidly-streaming brook pounds over moss-covered boulders and makes a roar far out of proportion to its size. The road changes to gravel for a short stretch then becomes hard-top again as it crosses Route 42 and heads for an area where reservoirs have been an actuality for many years.

Straight ahead the road crosses Mongaup Reservoir and turns left to Glen Spey, but for an excitingly different drive make a left turn into the narrow macadam road about two-thirds of a mile beyond the Route 42 blinker. This road calls for slow speeds but it is in good condition all the way. However, it is no place to run out of gas—there are no service stations.

Thick clusters of pine trees fringe the road. To the right a big black round wooden aqueduct snakes over the hilly ground to point the way to Rio Reservoir. Soon glimpses of the water appear through the trees. Then the road suddenly dips sharply upward where high tension wires cross and far below is a magnificent view of the reservoir.

THE motorist will observe the peculiar evenness and flatness of the stone ledges along the route. It appears almost as if nature had carefully built retaining walls of individual stones. Beyond the high tension lines the first road to the right leads over the Rio dam, the property of the Rockland Power & Light Co.—25 airline miles away in Nyack, N. Y.

Winding left past the dam the road again enters thick forest to join eventually a good macadam road. Make a right turn for Glen Spey, then follow signs to Eldred if a view of the proposed Barryville dam site on the Delaware is desired. The trip can be shortened by turning left in Glen Spey to Pond Eddy if the driver has had his fill for one day of forests.

Either way the return to Port Jervis is along a road literally carved out of the steep mountain above the Delaware. Throughout its length this is a remarkable route, but between Mongaup and Sparrow Bush it becomes the justly-famed Hawk's Nest, one of the East's most scenic drives.

MASSIVE rocks frown down from the left on the twisting concrete road hugging the mountain's contours. Many parking spots along the way give the motorist the opportunity to stop and enjoy the panoramic views across the river 400 feet below. Camera fans will find this short stretch of road has unlimited possibilities.

Just above Port Jervis a lookout platform beckons to the right. Deep in the valley is the railroad town, with puffing steam engines or noisy Deisels gliding over the myriad of criss-crossing tracks. A round-house is in full view from the platform to the infinite delight of the railroad enthusiast.

Nevertheless most prominent on the horizon is the High Point monument to the south. In effect it is a welcome back to New Jersey and an invitation to picnic in the state park before returning home.



Part of Delaware and Hudson Canal at Cuddebackville. Proposed Godeffroy Reservoir would have about the same bed through the valley as the waterway.

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